

My Homes Plus



Your story matters

Celebrating the voices of our communities

Page 3

Win £50
in vouchers

See your address
sheet for details

Housing Plus
Group one year on

Page
2

Reduce the risk of
damp and mould

Plus energy advice to
help heat your home this
winter

Page
4-5



Homes Plus

JANUARY 2026



One year on

Hello and welcome to the latest edition of My Homes Plus.

It's been one year since we came together as one organisation. Over the past 12 months, we've been working behind the scenes to make sure everything is in place to deliver the improvements you've told us matter most. In 2026, you'll start to see those changes come to life.

Changes you might start to see

Some of these will be easy to spot - like more of the Housing Plus Group branding appearing in your communities - but the biggest difference will be in the services you value the most, starting with repairs.

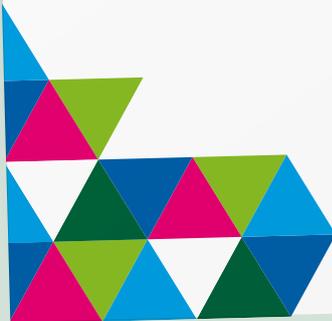
We asked over 10,000 customers what makes a great repairs service, and you told us loud and clear: communication, flexibility and a service that fits around your life. We've listened. This year, we're improving communication around the repairs we carry out in your homes and making our service more convenient for your needs.

We're also making sure we don't lose what matters most, including delivering services locally.

At the same time, we're investing millions in improving homes - from new kitchens and bathrooms to making properties more energy efficient. These changes are all about creating a better experience for you and creating places people are proud to call home.

Thank you for your feedback and support over the past year. We're excited about what's ahead, and we can't wait for you to see the difference.

Wayne Gethings
Group Chief Executive





Sarah Watson
Customer Committee Chair

Meet your new Customer Committee Chair

Hello, I'm delighted to be the new chair of Housing Plus Group's SPaCE Committee (Service, Performance and Customer Experience Committee).

As both a Housing Plus customer and someone with nearly 20 years' experience in research and analysis, I'm passionate about making sure customer voices shape the services we provide.

I've previously served as Vice-chair of the Customer Partnership Panel and helped establish the Customer Experience Committee, so I know how important it is that a wide range of views are heard. Diversity and inclusion are central to my work, and I'll ensure that customer perspectives inform decisions at board level.

Being appointed chair is a privilege, and I look forward to working with the committee to keep customers at the heart of everything Housing Plus Group does.

Sarah

Share your story

We believe the most powerful way to celebrate our communities is through the voices of the people who live in them. That's why we're launching a new campaign to shine a light on the everyday stories that make our neighbourhoods special.

Do you feel proud of your home, your journey, or the community around you? Have you overcome challenges, supported neighbours, or are involved in charity work or a local group? We'd love to hear from you.

We're looking for residents from all walks of life who are happy to share their experiences with us. Whatever your background or stage of life, your story could shine a light on the everyday kindness, resilience, and pride that make our communities special.

If you or someone you know has a story to tell, please get in touch – we'd love to celebrate! Email commsteam@hpg.org.uk for further details or to express an interest.



Winter advice

Report damp and mould

Ahead of new regulations coming into effect this year, we've improved our damp and mould repair process. Damp and mould are classed as health hazards, and can be caused by a number of things.

If you notice damp or mould, please report it as a repair as soon as possible. We will treat mould wherever it's present, and fix all damp and mould related issues within strict time frames.

Reduce the risk of damp and mould

Keeping on top of moisture levels in your home can be tricky. Items like **disposable dehumidifiers**, **hygrometers** and **draught excluders** offer cost-effective ways of reducing excess moisture in your home. They can be bought from most supermarkets and homeware stores or online.

Dehumidifiers

Disposable and compact, dehumidifiers absorb excess moisture in the air



Hygrometers

By measuring humidity levels, hygrometers show you when to ventilate a room



Draught excluders

Whilst helping to retain heat, draught excluders placed at the bottom of doors can prevent draughts without affecting healthy air flow around your home

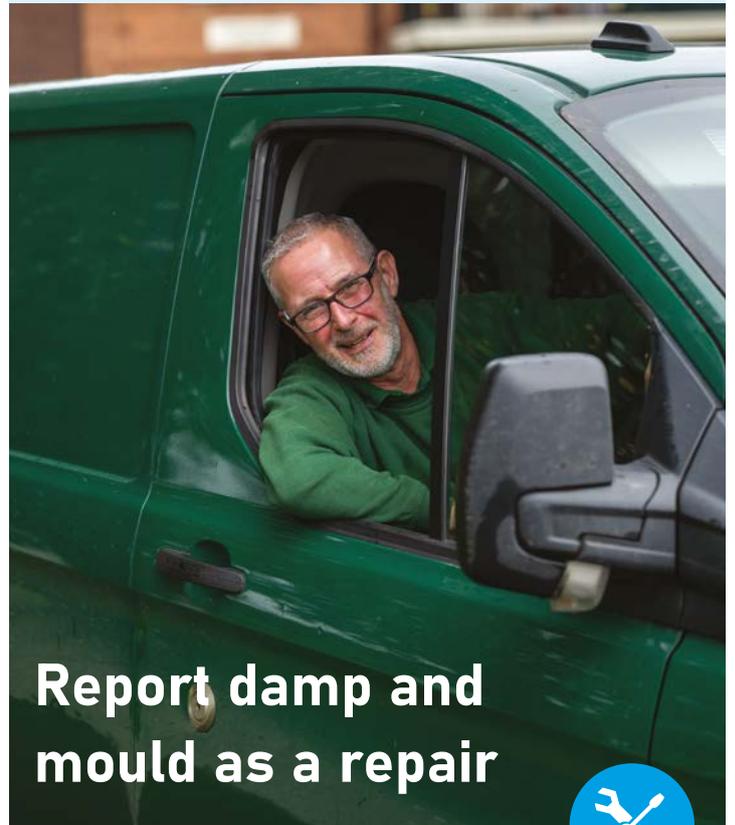
You can find more information on our website, including easy tips to cut condensation. Visit:

homesplus.co.uk/damp-mould-and-condensation



Things that can cause damp and mould

- ▶ Switched-off or broken extractor fans
- ▶ Cold spots in the corner of a room
- ▶ Structural issues with the roof or loft
- ▶ Guttering issues that may cause leaks
- ▶ Excess moisture from daily activities
- ▶ A drop in temperature or lack of heating



Report damp and mould as a repair



Call **0800 048 8955**

Heating your home

It's important to keep your heating on at a consistent level. This helps to reduce condensation collecting on cold surfaces which can cause mould growth.

If you might struggle to heat your home this winter, please contact us.

Our Energy Advisors offer free, expert advice and can help with things like:

- ▶ Winter Fuel and Cold Weather payments
- ▶ Winter Warm packs
- ▶ Energy grants
- ▶ Resolving issues with suppliers and finding the best deal

Speak to your housing team, drop into one of our community hubs or contact us. Email:

energyadvice@hpg.org.uk

Or call: **0800 048 8955**

Energy saving tips

Saving energy can make your home warmer and reduce your bills. Here are some easy changes you can make.

Heating

- ▶ Turn your thermostat down by just 1°C – you probably won't notice the difference.
- ▶ Keep furniture away from radiators so heat can circulate.
- ▶ Use draught excluders and close doors to keep warm air in.

Lighting and appliance

- ▶ Switch off appliances at the plug instead of leaving them on standby.
- ▶ Replace old light bulbs with LEDs – they last longer and cost less to run – and switch them off when they're not needed.
- ▶ Wash clothes at 30°C and maximise loads rather than washing just a few items at a time.
- ▶ Air dry clothes outside whenever possible.

Water and kitchen

- ▶ Only boil as much water as you need in the kettle.
- ▶ Try taking shorter showers.
- ▶ Use a washing-up bowl instead of running the tap.
- ▶ If you have them, utilise appliances like air fryers and slow cookers rather than the oven.

Housing Plus Group News

Energy advice service expands

All Housing Plus Group customers can now access our free energy advice service thanks to £220,000 of funding from the Cadent Foundation.

Need advice on reducing your energy use, finding a better deal, or getting a smart meter? Maybe you're having issues with your supplier, are worried about energy debt, or just need help understanding your bills?

Our expert energy advisors are here to help.

This service, which has been available to Wrekin Housing Group customers since 2023, is now available to all Housing Plus Group customers.

You can contact Dan and the team by calling **0800 048 8955**, emailing energyadvice@hpg.org.uk or by asking your housing executive or neighbourhood officer to refer you.



Money Advice Manager, Dan

Customer who couldn't read or write lands job after reaching out for support

When Michael was referred to the Employment and Money Advice service, he had lost his job and couldn't read or write.

After nearly 40 years as a butcher, he feared for his finances, struggled with job applications and didn't know where to turn. At the Castlefields Community Hub in Shrewsbury, he met Employment and Money Advice Officer Sharlene Johnson-Jones, who suspected he had undiagnosed dyslexia.

With her support, Michael received a dyslexia diagnosis, completed talking therapy and Read Easy training, and was guided through his PIP assessment and budgeting to maximise his income. Sharlene also helped him update his CV and search for work. Michael first secured a cleaning job before gaining a part-time role at a family-run butchers.

“ I know if I ever need any help I can go to the hub. It's a life saver for people like me. ”

Michael



New year money checklist

- Reflect on your 2025 spending habits.** Identify any areas where you have overspent and consider what you could do better in the year ahead.
- Set clear financial goals for 2026.** This might be building an emergency fund, paying off debt, cutting your spending on non-essentials or finding ways to boost your income.
- Automate your savings.** Setting up a monthly transfer to a separate account makes saving effortless and consistent. Even small amounts will soon add up.
- Use budgeting apps,** spreadsheets or just a pen and paper to track your income and expenses.
- Take time to learn more about personal finance.** Free online resources can boost your confidence and help you make smarter money choices.

If you're worried about money, you can contact Homes Plus' Employment and Money Advice Service.

Call 0800 048 8955 or drop into one of the community hubs



Financial education

600

students benefited

Housing Plus Group donations help provide financial education in Stafford schools

More than 600 pupils at Stafford Manor High School have taken part in a Moneywise project which helps them to build knowledge, confidence and financial resilience, thanks to a £1,400 donation from Housing Plus Group.

Community Safety Education (CSE) worked with pupils to empower them with the knowledge and necessary skills to make informed financial decisions.

And now we have donated a further **£1,400** to CSE to help run the financial literacy courses at King Edward VI School in Stafford.

Fire Service urges public to 'Stay Current' with electrical fire safety

Local fire services are encouraging residents to take a few simple steps to protect their homes from electrical fires. In 2024, there were over 1,140 accidental electrical fires across England – that's an average of three every single day, many caused by everyday appliances like washing machines and tumble dryers.

We want to help you stay safe. Here's how:

- ▶ **Check your plugs and sockets.** Look out for scorch marks, hot plugs or sockets, flickering lights, or fuses that blow for no clear reason. These could be signs of faulty wiring.
- ▶ **Register your appliances.** It's quick and easy – and it means manufacturers can contact you about safety updates or recalls.
- ▶ **Be smart with extension leads.** Plug large appliances like washing machines and tumble dryers directly into wall sockets. Extension leads can easily become overloaded and increase the risk of fire.
- ▶ **Don't leave appliances running overnight or while you're out.** Turn off washing machines, tumble dryers, and dishwashers before going to bed or leaving the house.
- ▶ **Make sure you test your smoke alarms regularly.**

You can find more safety tips on our website: homesplus.co.uk/HUKYS

Warm spaces this winter!

Come in for a cuppa

Some of our Retirement Living schemes and Community Hubs are hosting regular community sessions where you can enjoy a hot drink, a bite to eat, and friendly company. If you, or someone you know, would like to join us, please get in touch.

All our ShireLiving communities also have welcoming onsite cafés that are open to everyone, offering hot, quality food and a relaxed space to spend time in.

Burton Square Community Hub

📍 **Stafford**

🕒 **Every Monday,
Wednesday and Thursday**

Bridle Court Retirement Living Breakfast Brunch

📍 **Madeley, Telford**

🕒 **Every other Monday
morning**

Call: **01952 583079**

Morton Court Retirement Living Lunch Club

📍 **Dawley, Telford**

🕒 **Every Wednesday**

Call: **01952 506345**

Haybridge Hall Retirement Living Lunch and Bingo

📍 **Hadley, Telford**

🕒 **Once a month on a Friday**

Call: **07816 510184**

Vicarage Grove Retirement Living Men in Kitchens Club

📍 **Dawley, Telford**

🕒 **Every other Tuesday**

Call: **01952 504561**



Win £50 in shopping vouchers

Give us your feedback for your chance to win one of three £50 shopping vouchers!

Scan the QR code to **complete the survey online**, or turn to the back of your address sheet to fill it in by hand and return it to our freepost address:

**Housing Plus Group, M&C,
FREEPOST RTSU-ATXA-
ZATE, Colliers Way, Old Park,
Telford, TF3 4AW.**

The survey closes at midnight on Sunday 1 February 2026.



Mr Leslie from Shrewsbury found the missing word from July's word search - DANCE, and was drawn at random to win £50 in shopping vouchers.

Congratulations!

**Word
search
winner**

Do you have contents insurances?

Without contents insurance, your personal belongings aren't protected against unexpected events like fire, flood, burst pipes, or other household emergencies. From less than a pound a week, you can enjoy invaluable peace of mind knowing your possessions are covered.

We've partnered with a leading insurer to offer an exclusive home contents insurance scheme for our customers. It's simple, affordable, and payable monthly – with no excess, meaning you won't pay anything extra if you need to make a claim.

Find out more and protect what matters most today.

Visit [homesplus.co.uk/contents-insurance](https://www.homesplus.co.uk/contents-insurance)

